



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*Charles R. Gross  
United States Attorney's Office  
Western District of Michigan*

*The Law Building, 5th Floor  
330 Ionia Avenue, N.W.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503*

*Mailing Address: (616) 456-2404*

*United States Attorneys Office Facsimile (616) 456-2408  
Post Office Box 208  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501-0208*

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**CONTACT: MAARTEN VERMAAT**  
**ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY**  
**PHONE: (906) 226-2500**

**MARQUETTE MAN SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS ON FIREARMS CHARGE**

**Marquette, Michigan** – Jesse Lee Stark, age 26, of Marquette, Michigan, was sentenced on Friday, October 19 to 180 months in prison following his plea of guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm, U.S. Attorney Charles R. Gross announced today. Stark was charged in a one-count indictment with possessing a Ruger .22 caliber pistol during December 2006 and January 2007 after he had been convicted of four prior felonies involving breaking and entering or home invasion. Under the “three strikes” provision of Title 18, section 924(e) of the United States Code, the minimum penalty is 15 years’ imprisonment.

This case arose from the execution of a search warrant at a suspected drug house in Ishpeming on September 19, 2007 by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and the Upper Peninsula Substance Enforcement Team (UPSET), as a result of which several items, including the .22 Ruger, were seized. Subsequent investigation determined that the firearm had been purchased from Stark, who admitted to having stolen the firearm, which he later sold.

A review of Stark’s criminal history revealed that he had previously been convicted of three separate breaking and entering offenses in North Carolina in 1998 and a home invasion in Alger County, Michigan in 2002, each of which is considered a violent felony under the federal

firearms laws. As a result, his possession of the firearm subjected him to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in prison.

United States District Court Judge R. Allan Edgar pronounced sentence.

The case was prosecuted under the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative by Assistant U.S. Attorney Maarten Vermaat.

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